

2/15

Description

Method for checking the quality of data transmission between a read/write device (SLG) and at least one mobile data memory (MDS), and read/write device (SLG) and mobile data memory (MDS) for using the method

The invention relates to a method for checking data transmission between at least one read/write device (SLG) and at least one mobile data memory (MDS), in particular in an identification system having at least one mobile data memory (MDS) which is fitted to objects and is intended to detect object-related state and/or process data, for example in a system for dispatching, transporting and/or manufacturing the individual objects. The invention also relates to a read/write device (SLG) and to a mobile data memory (MDS) for using the method.

High-speed data transmissions between read/write devices (SLG) and mobile data memories (MDS) are known as the prior art in industrial non-contacting identification technology. The respective PTT radio regulations must be complied with as regards the frequency, field strength, modulation bandwidth, interference emissions, interference influences etc. of the air interfaces which occur in this case. When there are additional electromagnetic sources, data transmission between the read/write devices (SLG) and the mobile data memories (MDS) may be subject to interference in the air interface. The data transmission reliability is also influenced and possibly impaired by location-related conditions and environment data, for example the distance between the read/write device (SLG) and the mobile data memory (MDS), the travel speed of the mobile data memory (MDS), the ambient temperature etc.

- 1a -

The invention is based on the object of providing a method for checking the quality of data transmission between

- 2 -

at least one read/write device (SLG) and at least one mobile data memory (MDS). A further aim is to provide a read/write device (SLG) and a mobile data memory (MDS) for using the method.

5

In the inventive method for checking data transmission between at least one read/write device (SLG) and at least one mobile data memory (MDS), at least one register area for entering data information relating to the quality of data transmission between the read/write device (SLG) and the mobile data memory (MDS) is provided in the read/write device (SLG) and/or in the mobile data memory (MDS). This register area is read and/or evaluated by at least one external computer user station for the purpose of checking the quality of data transmission between the read/write device (SLG) and the mobile data memory (MDS). This computer user station can be used to remotely diagnose data transmission between the read/write device (SLG) and mobile data memories (MDS) in a specific manner, and it is possible to identify and eliminate data transmission problems which occur, in particular, during commissioning of a data transmission system such as this but also when using the system in the field.

25

The inventive method can be used to detect the quality of the air interfaces when transmitting data between the read/write device (SLG) and the mobile data memory (MDS) and to assess and evaluate said quality in the external computer user station. All communication faults or impairments such as to communication can also be detected and eliminated.

35

According to one advantageous method variant, the external computer user station can be connected to at least one read/write device (SLG) for the purpose of transmitting data. This makes it possible to read the respective register areas in the read/write device

WO 2004/038591

PCT/DE2003/003344

- 2a -

(SLG) which relate to the quality of data transmission.

- 3 -

The read/write device (SLG) in turn communicates with the mobile data memory (MDS) and can read the appropriate register areas which relate to the quality of data transmission and can store them in its own 5 register areas in order to be read by the external computer user station.

In accordance with another advantageous method variant, the external computer user station is connected to the 10 read/write device (SLG) via a connection module. In a connection module such as this, data can be transmitted between the read/write device (SLG) and the external computer user station in accordance with a protocol. A connection module such as this makes it possible to 15 transmit data, which has been transmitted, for example, from the read/write device (SLG) to the external computer user station, only after blocks have been formed, packets have been formed and protocol conformity has been checked. A connection module such 20 as this makes it possible to transmit data between the read/write device (SLG) and the external computer user station in a more reliable and more rapid manner.

In accordance with another advantageous method variant, 25 the external computer user station can be connected to the read/write device (SLG) via a controller, for example for controlling a dispatch, transport and/or manufacturing system. In this case, the controller is used to control the processes in the respective 30 industrial system being operated and instigates and monitors planned operation of systems such as these. When the external computer user station is connected to the read/write device (SLG) via a controller such as this, it is also possible, in addition to the items of 35 data which are to be read from the read/write device (SLG), to read items of control data and to associate them with one another and jointly evaluate them in the external computer user station. This makes it possible

- 3a -

to also take into account, in the external computer user station, the respective process states of the controlled industrial system when evaluating the data

- 4 -

(relating to the quality of data transmission between the read/write device (SLG) and mobile data memories (MDS)) received from the read/write device (SLG).

5 The inventive read/write device (SLG) has at least one register area for entering data information relating to the quality of data transmission to the mobile data memories (MDS). In addition to storing the object-related state and/or process data detected between the
10 read/write device (SLG) and the mobile data memory (MDS), this at least one further register area also makes it possible to store data relating to the quality of data transmission, and to store the latter in order to be read by the external computer user station. The
15 inventive read/write device (SLG) is thus also suited to remote diagnosis using an external computer user station.

20 In one advantageous embodiment of the read/write device (SLG), the register area for entering the data information relating to the quality of data transmission is associated with a further register area in at least one mobile data memory (MDS), this further register area likewise being provided for entering data
25 information relating to the quality of data transmission.

30 Associating register areas such as these between the read/write device (SLG) and the mobile data memory (MDS) makes it possible for data and protocol formats to be appropriately matched to one another and for items of information which refer to one another to also be stored in corresponding register areas. This makes
35 it easier to read the data information relating to the quality of data transmission from the respective register areas.

The inventive mobile data memory (MDS) advantageously

- 4a -

likewise has at least one register area for entering data information relating to the quality of

- 5 -

data transmission. This likewise facilitates communication with the read/write device (SLG), as described above.

- 5 The invention is explained in more detail using exemplary embodiments in the figures of the drawing, in which:

10 Figure 1 shows a schematic illustration of one possible connection of the mobile data memory (MDS) and the read/write device (SLG) to an external computer user station,
Figure 2 shows a specific illustration of register areas in a read/write device (SLG), and
15 Figure 3 shows a specific illustration of register areas in a mobile data memory (MDS).

20 Figure 1 shows a read/write device (SLG) and a mobile data memory (MDS) in a dispatch, transport and/or manufacturing system (which is known per se but is not shown in any more detail) for detecting object-related state and/or process data of the respective system. In this case, the read/write device (SLG) is stationary, and data is transmitted between the read/write device (SLG) and the respective mobile data memories (MDS) via an air interface 1. A read/write device (SLG) usually communicates with a plurality of mobile data memories (MDS) (not shown in any more detail).

25 30 The read/write device (SLG) is connected to an external computer user station (for example a personal computer) via a connection module 2 and a controller 3, to be precise via a network (for example TCP/IP, WLAN etc.) that is known per se. The data transmitted in the network may be transmitted in accordance with various network protocols (for example ProfiBus, CAN, EtherNet etc.) which are known per se.

- 6 -

According to the invention, the read/write device (SLG) has additional register areas F, G, H, I and J for entering data information relating to the quality of data transmission with the mobile data memory (MDS).

5 The read/write device (SLG) also has register areas (known per se) for recording and storing the object-related state and/or process data (not shown in any more detail) which has been transmitted. Additional register areas A, B, C, D and E which are likewise used
10 to enter data information relating to the quality of data transmission with the read/write device (SLG) are likewise provided in the mobile data memory (MDS).

15 The computer user station 4 can now use the controller 3 and the connection module 2 to read the register areas F-J in the read/write device (SLG) and to detect the data information which relates to the quality of data transmission and is stored in said read/write device and also to eliminate data transmission errors
20 in the event of disturbances occurring.

Figures 2 and 3 show, by way of example, data information relating to the quality of data transmission. The data information relating to the period of time for which there was no mobile data memory (MDS) in the existing data transmission field can be stored in the register area F in the read/write device (SLG). The duration of communication with the mobile data memory (MDS) can be stored in the register area G. The register area H can record the number of collisions during multiple day operation with a plurality of mobile data memories (MDS)..

35 The number of message repetitions to the mobile data memory (MDS) can be recorded in the register I, and the number of disturbances while the mobile data memory (MDS) is receiving data can be recorded in the register area J.

- 7 -

- The register areas F-J in the read/write device (SLG) thus comprise data information relating to the quality of data transmission between the read/write device (SLG) and the mobile data memory (MDS), which data 5 information can be read and evaluated by the external computer user station 4. This means that, when reading the register area A, for example, it is possible to establish, from the determination of a large number of collisions during operation with a plurality of mobile 10 data memories (MDS), that the read/write device (SLG) may communicate only with a relatively small number of mobile data memories (MDS) in order to eliminate the communication disturbance.
- 15 As shown in Figure 3, in addition to register areas (which are known per se but are not shown in any more detail) for recording and storing the object-related state and/or process data that has been transmitted, the mobile data memory (MDS) has, according to the 20 invention, register areas A - E, with the period for which the mobile data memory (MDS) is present in the data field, for example, being recorded in the register area A. The magnitude of the supply voltage of the mobile data memory (MDS) may be ascertained directly, 25 and the field strength of the field of the mobile data memory (MDS) and the range of the field of the mobile data memory (MDS) may thus be ascertained indirectly, in the register area B.
- 30 The register area C may relate to the temperature of the mobile data memory chip (MDS), the register area D may relate to the number of message repetitions to the read/write device (SLG), and the register area E may relate to the number of disturbances when the 35 read/write device (SLG) is receiving the data.

The register areas A - E may be read by the external computer user station 4 using the read/write device

- 7a -

(SLG). In this case, the register areas G and J in the read/write device (SLG) and in the mobile data memory (MDS) are associated with one another, by way of example, and respectively relate to the number of 5 disturbances when the read/write device (SLG) and the mobile data memory (MDS), respectively, are receiving the data. It

- 8 -

is possible to facilitate the analysis and elimination of disturbances in the external computer user station 4 by reading and evaluating associated register areas such as these.